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Coming off climate talks, U.S. to hold huge crude sale in Gulf

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — The U.S. Interior Department on Wednesday will auction vast oil reserves in the Gulf of Mexico estimated to hold up to 1.1 billion barrels of crude, the first such sale under President Joe Biden and a harbinger of the challenges he faces to reach climate goals that depend on deep cuts in fossil fuel emissions.

The livestreamed sale will invite energy companies to bid on drilling leases across some 136,000 square miles (352,000 square kilometers) — about twice the area of Florida.

It will take years to develop the leases before companies start pumping crude. That means they could keep producing long past 2030, when scientists say the world needs to be well on the way to cutting greenhouse gas emissions to avoid catastrophic climate change.

Continued on next page



CRUDE AWAKENING

A man wears a face mark as he fishes near docked oil drilling platforms, Friday, May 8, 2020, in Port Aransas, Texas.

Associated Press

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Continued from Front

The auction comes after a federal judge in a lawsuit brought by Republican states rejected a suspension of fossil fuel sales that Biden imposed when he first took office.

The Democrat campaigned on promises to end drilling on public lands and waters, which account for roughly one-tenth of U.S. energy-related emissions. Yet even as he's tried to cajole other world leaders into strengthening international efforts against global warming, Wednesday's sale illustrates Biden's difficulties gaining ground on climate issues at home. The administration last week proposed another round of oil and gas lease sales in 2022, in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and other western states. Interior Department officials proceeded despite concluding that burning the fuels could lead to billions of dollars in potential future climate damages.

"We had Trump's unconstrained approach to oil and gas on federal lands and Biden's early attempt to pause drilling. Now it looks like the Biden administration is trying to find a new policy," said researcher Robert Johnston with Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy.

"They're being very cautious about undermining their fragile momentum" on climate issues, he added. Environmental reviews of the Gulf of Mexico sale conducted under former President Donald Trump and affirmed under Biden reached an unlikely conclusion: Extracting and burning the fuel would result in fewer greenhouse gases than leaving it in the ground.

Similar claims in two other cases, in Alaska, were rejected by federal courts



This Oct. 27, 2011, file photo, shows the Perdido oil platform located about 200 miles south of Galveston, Texas, in the Gulf of Mexico.

Associated Press

after challenges from environmentalists. Climate scientist Peter Erickson — whose work was cited by judges in one of the cases — said the Interior Department's analysis had a glaring omission: They left out greenhouse gas increases in foreign countries that would result from having more Gulf oil on the market.

"The math is extremely simple on this kind of stuff," said Erickson, a senior scientist with the Stockholm Environment Institute, a nonprofit research group headquartered in Sweden. "If new leases expand the global oil supply, that has a proportional effect on emissions from burning oil. Therefore, giving out these leases in the Gulf of Mexico would be increasing global emissions."

The Interior Department's

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management in recent months changed its emissions modeling methods, citing Erickson's work. But officials said it was too late to use the new approach for Wednesday's lease sale, which they said had been through "a rigorous process with specific timelines."

"The environmental analysis for Lease Sale 257 was already complete and as such does not contain the newer approach to considering the impacts of foreign consumption of oil and gas," the agency said in a statement provided to The Associated Press.

Administration officials declined AP's interview requests. For upcoming sales, spokesperson Melissa Schwartz said Interior is conducting a more comprehensive emission review than any prior administra-

tion, as it appeals the court order that forced their resumption.

Erik Milito, president of the National Ocean Industries Association said he was uncertain that using the new approach would have changed the government's conclusions, since drilling for oil in other parts of the world is less efficient and hauling imports also adds to carbon costs. He described the Gulf as the "backbone of U.S. oil production" and said companies consider it a strong investment.

The continued use of the old analysis rankles drilling opponents who say Biden isn't following through on his climate pledges.

"We're talking about transitioning away from a fossil fuel economy and they are selling a giant carbon bomb of a lease sale," said attorney Drew Caputo with

Earthjustice, which has a lawsuit challenging the Gulf lease sale pending in federal court. "That creates a property right to develop those leases. It's a lot harder to keep the carbon in the ground if you sell the lease." Some Democrats also objected to the sale. The chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, Arizona Rep. Raúl Grijalva, said Biden promised to lead on climate issues but continues running a fossil fuel program with a long history of mismanagement. "The administration needs to do better," Grijalva said in a statement Tuesday.

Since the Interior Department began holding Gulf-wide lease sales in 2017, an average of 1,075 square miles (2,780 square kilometers) have been sold at each sale, generating almost \$1 billion in revenue over that period. The largest was nearly 1,875 square miles (4,856 square kilometers), in March 2019.

The Gulf of Mexico accounts for about 15% of total U.S. crude production and 5% of its natural gas.

Industry analysts predict some heightened interest in Wednesday's sale, since oil prices rose sharply over the past year. It's also a chance for companies to secure drilling rights before the administration or Congress can increase drilling fees and royalty rates or adopt new restrictions on environmental permits, said analyst Justin Rostant with industry consulting firm Wood Mackenzie.

An outright ban on new leases and drilling seems unlikely after the federal court shot down Biden's temporary suspension, he added.

"Different companies have different approaches and different strategies," Rostant said. "Some could think this might be the year to go big." □

Durbin calls for Garland to remove federal prisons director

By MICHAEL BALSAMO

WASHINGTON (AP) — The chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee demanded Tuesday that Attorney General Merrick Garland immediately fire the director of the beleaguered federal Bureau of Prisons after an Associated Press investigation detailing serious misconduct involving correctional officers.

Sen. Dick Durbin's demand came two days after the AP revealed that more than 100 Bureau of Prisons workers have been arrested, convicted or sentenced for crimes since the start of 2019. The AP investigation also found the agency has turned a blind eye to employees accused of misconduct and has failed to suspend officers who themselves had been arrested for crimes.

Durbin took particular aim at Director Michael Carvajal, who has been at the center of the agency's myriad crises. Under Carvajal's leadership, the agency has experienced a multitude of crises from the rampant spread of coronavirus inside prisons and a failed response to the pandemic to dozens of escapes, deaths and critically low staffing levels that have hampered responses to emergencies.

Carvajal was appointed by then-Attorney General William Barr but Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco said recently that she still had confidence in him despite the many serious issues during his tenure. The AP reported in June that senior officials in the Biden administration had been weighing whether to oust him. He is one of the few remaining holdovers from the Trump administration.

"Director Carvajal was handpicked by former Attorney General Bill Barr and has overseen a series of mounting crises, including failing to protect BOP staff and inmates from the COVID-19 pandemic, failing to address chronic understaffing, failing to implement the landmark First Step Act, and more," Durbin said in a statement. "It is past time for Attorney General Garland



Attorney General Merrick Garland speaks during a Tribal Nations Summit during Native American Heritage Month, in the South Court Auditorium on the White House campus, Monday, Nov. 15, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

to replace Director Carvajal with a reform-minded Director who is not a product of the BOP bureaucracy."

Two-thirds of the criminal cases against Justice Department personnel in recent years have involved federal prison workers, who account for less than one-third of the department's workforce. Of the 41 arrests this year, 28 were of BOP employees or contractors. The FBI had just five. The Drug Enforcement Administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives each had two.

The AP investigation also detailed how the Bureau of Prisons allowed an official at a federal prison in Mississippi, whose job it was to investigate misconduct of other staff members, to remain in his position after he was arrested on charges of stalking and harassing fellow employees. That official was also allowed to continue investigating a staff member who had accused him of a crime.

And in the last week, two inmates have escaped from the custody of the Bureau of Prisons, marking at least 36 escapes within the last 22 months.

"We have a new Administration and a new opportunity to reform our criminal justice system," Durbin said. "It's clear that there is much going wrong in our federal prisons, and we urgently need to fix it. That effort

must start with new leadership."

Separately on Tuesday, the

Justice Department's inspector general found that the Bureau of Prisons had

stalled the development of more than 30 agency policies because agency officials have been refusing to meet with the union representing prison workers for in-person policy negotiations, as required under a contract.

About half of the policies that have stalled for the last 20 months were created or revised in response to the First Step Act, a bipartisan criminal justice overhaul signed during the Trump administration and aimed at encouraging inmates to participate in programs aimed at reducing recidivism — which could let them out of prison earlier — easing mandatory minimum sentences and giving judges more discretion in sentencing. □



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Michelle Wu sworn in as Boston's first woman elected mayor

By STEVE LeBLANC

BOSTON (AP) — Michelle Wu was sworn in Tuesday as Boston's first woman and first person of color elected mayor in the city's long history.

The swearing-in of the city's first Asian American mayor came two weeks after Wu won the city's mayoral election. Before Wu, Boston had elected only white men as mayor.

"City government is special. We are the level closest to the people, so we must do the big and the small. Every streetlight, every pothole, every park and classroom, lays the foundation for greater change," Wu said after taking the oath of office.

"After all, Boston was founded on a revolutionary promise: that things don't have to be as they always have been. That we can chart a new path for families now, and for generations to come, grounded in justice and opportunity," she said.

Wu, 36, takes over for a fellow Democrat — former acting Mayor Kim Janey — who was Boston's first woman and first Black resident to serve in, but who was not



Michelle Wu raises her hand as she is sworn-in as Boston Mayor during a ceremony at Boston City Hall, Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021, in Boston.

Associated Press

elected to the top post. Wu said when she first set foot inside the cavernous Boston City Hall, she felt swallowed up by the maze of concrete hallways, checkpoints and looming counters — all reminders of why her immigrant family tried to steer clear of such spaces.

But she said her family's struggles eventually brought her to an internship with former Mayor Thomas Menino and ultimately a

seat on the Boston City Council where, she said, she learned the ropes of city government and politics.

"Today I know City Hall's passageways and stairwells like my own home," she said.

The swearing-in means Wu will now face the daunting task of trying to make good on a slew of ambitious policy proposals that were the backbone of her campaign.

To push back against soaring housing costs that have forced some former residents out of the city, Wu has promised to pursue rent stabilization or rent control. The biggest hurdle to that proposal is the fact that Massachusetts voters narrowly approved a 1994 ballot question banning rent control statewide.

Another of Wu's top campaign promises is to create a "fare-free" public transit system. Wu has said the

proposal would strengthen the city's economy, address climate change and help those who take the bus or subway to school or work.

Like the rent control pledge, Wu can't unilaterally do away with fares on the public transit system. Wu has said she would try to work with partners in state government to make each proposal a reality.

In her comments Tuesday, Wu said it's critical to tackle the big challenges she has promised while not losing sight of the nitty-gritty of city government.

"Not only is it possible for Boston to deliver basic city services and generational change — it is absolutely necessary in this moment," she said. "We'll tackle our biggest challenges by getting the small things right."

Wu, whose parents immigrated to the U.S. from Taiwan, grew up in Chicago and moved to Boston to attend Harvard University and Harvard Law School. She has two small children. Janey made brief comments before Wu was sworn in, thanking the city for the chance to serve as mayor, even for a brief period. □

Houston officials pick internal review of Astroworld tragedy



A man wears a t-shirt that reads "I hope you're dancing in the sky" in memory of Astroworld victim Brianna Rodriguez who was known for being a dancer as family, friends and community members gathered at La Paz Memorial Funeral Home to remember Rodriguez, Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021, in Houston.

Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Calls for an independent investigation into what led to 10 deaths at the Astroworld music festival went unanswered Monday, as Houston-area officials instead

chose to direct a county administrator to conduct a review with other governmental entities.

County Judge Lina Hidalgo — the top elected official in Harris County, which

includes Houston — had proposed a third-party probe of the planning and execution of the festival founded and headlined by rap superstar Travis Scott.

The Harris County administrator instead will work with other city and county entities to review security, fire and other safety plans at the county-owned NRG Park, where the festival was held.

"I hope that it comes back with actionable lessons," Hidalgo said. "I hope it doesn't result in something vague or forgotten."

Other members of Harris County's governing body, known as a commissioner's court, were concerned Hidalgo's investigation could lead to legal liabilities for the county.

Dozens of lawsuits have already been filed over injuries and deaths at the Nov. 5 concert.

Houston police are conducting a separate criminal investigation into what happened at the festival.

No one has been charged. The police department, along with the city fire department, played key roles in crowd control and other safety measures at the show. Experts in crowd safety say an investigation by neutral outsiders into the tragedy could help avoid potential conflicts of interest and promote transparency.

Police have said they are reviewing surveillance video provided by concert promoter Live Nation, as well as dozens of clips of the show shared on social

media. Investigators also planned to speak with Live Nation representatives, Scott and concertgoers.

Over 300 people were treated on site for injuries at the show, and at least 25 were hospitalized.

Many unanswered questions center on the actions of event organizers.

A 56-page event operations plan for the Astroworld music festival included protocols for dangerous scenarios including an active shooter, bomb or terrorist threats, and severe weather. But it did not include information on what to do in the event of a crowd surge.

The 10 people who died included a 9-year-old boy. The oldest was 27. Reports on individual causes of death are pending. □

Envoy: U.S. ready to confront attempts to tear Bosnia apart

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (AP) — The United States is paying very close attention to Bosnia's political crisis and has tools it can use against the divisive nationalist leaders in the war-scarred, multiethnic Balkan country who would try to "tear it apart," a senior U.S. official said Tuesday.

"Our appeal to leaders (in Bosnia) ... is to rise above their own self-interest and to try to keep in mind the broader interest of their country," U.S. State Department Counselor Derek Chollet told The Associated Press in an interview.

"If leaders continue on the path toward divisiveness, disintegration, withdrawal from the central institutions, there are tools we have to punish that kind of behavior," he added, mentioning possible sanctions.

Chollet, who serves as an adviser to the U.S. secretary of state, arrived in Bosnia on Monday for three days of meetings with its top political leaders amid the Balkan country's worst political crisis since a U.S.-brokered peace deal ended more than 3 1/2 years of blood-



In this photo provided by the Bosnian Presidential Press Service, U.S. State Department Counselor Derek Chollet, third right, poses with U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina Eric Nelson, left, Croatian member of the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia Zeljko Komsic, second left, Muslim member of the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia Sefik Dzaferovic, third left, Bosnian Serb member of the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia Milorad Dodik, second right, and U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Gabriel Escobar, right, in Sarajevo, Bosnia, Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

shed in 1995.

The Bosnian War started in 1992 when Belgrade-backed Bosnian Serbs tried to create ethnically pure region with the aim of join-

ing neighboring Serbia by driving out the country's Croats and Bosniaks, who are mostly Muslim. More than 100,000 people were killed and upward of 2

million, or over half of the country's population, were driven from their homes before a peace agreement was reached in Dayton, Ohio, in November 1995.

The agreement divided Bosnia into two regions — the Serb-run Republika Srpska and the Bosniak-Croat Federation — which were given wide autonomy but remain linked by some joint institutions including the multi-ethnic presidency, the parliament, the army, the top judiciary and the tax administration.

Serbs have for years been advocating the separation of their mini-state from the rest of Bosnia. But their hardline leader, Milorad Dodik, who has tacit support from Russia and Serbia, recently upped the drive by pledging that the Bosnian Serb region would, by the end of November, declare the creation of its own army and judiciary.

Dodik, who serves as the Serb member of Bosnia's multi-ethnic presidency, has threatened to take over Bosnian army barracks in the Serb half of the country once the Bosnian Serb military is formed. He said if the West tries to intervene, he would call his Bosnian Serb "friends" for help.

"We are very worried," said Chollet. □

Choppers rescue travelers on Canada highway after mudslides

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Nearly 300 people trapped overnight in their vehicles by mudslides on a highway in British Columbia were being flown to safety by helicopters Monday while authorities sought to determine if anyone was swept up in the flow of debris set off by torrential rain.

A yellow Cormorant chopper dropped people off near the community center in the town of Agassiz before taking off for another rescue trip.

"Trapped between two slides are approximately 275 additional people, including 50 children, who were advised to shelter in place overnight as debris was unstable and unsafe to cross," the City of Vancouver and Canada Task Force 1 said in a joint release.

Multiple highways in British

Columbia were closed due to the downpour.

Melanie Forsythe said her drive home from Vancouver to Hope, British Columbia, had her making at least five detours as rain washed out a bridge, closed roads and trapped her overnight between two mudslides before a helicopter landed on the highway and carried her to Agassiz.

Forsythe, who was with her boyfriend, Shawn Ramsay, and a friend, made it to the town about 18 hours after they were forced to stop on Highway 7 with nearly 300 other travelers.

"All three of us were kind of hyping each other up, saying it's going to be good, we're going to get out of here. But then we all had moments like, 'Is this it? Is this the last time we're going to see our kids?' We were talking to our parents and our families, but it was

just a scary situation," she said.

Forsythe said everyone in her vehicle joined about two dozen people on the flight to Agassiz, where nearly 80 others from the highway had already arrived. Forsythe said their vehicles were expected to be towed. Her group was about a nine-hour drive from home and couldn't find a hotel room to spend the night.

Twelve people had been rescued from Highway 7 by the local fire department Sunday evening before the Vancouver Heavy Urban Search and Rescue Team was called in Monday. Jashanpreet Singh and his wife, Harleen Kaur, were also caught between the two slides Sunday and said they came upon a vehicle that had been partially crushed by a slide.

A 9-year-old boy was in-



A vehicle is submerged in flood waters along a road in Abbotsford, British Columbia, Monday, Nov. 15, 2021.

Associated Press

jured and had blood coming out of his nose and ears, Kaur said. Firefighters who were first to the scene Sunday were able to take the boy to care, she said.

The couple was flown out Monday. Singh said they learned a valuable lesson because they had no food or water with them.

The deluges in parts of the province also caused the

interior town of Merritt to issue an evacuation order Monday, warning its 7,000 residents not to use water from faucets or flush toilets. Flood warnings and watches were issued on rivers and streams for areas from Merritt south to the border with the United States, the lower Fraser region and sections of southern Vancouver Island. □

Myanmar election body charges Suu Kyi with electoral fraud

By GRANT PECK

BANGKOK (AP) — Myanmar's state election commission announced it is prosecuting the country's ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, and 15 other senior political figures for alleged fraud in last November's general election.

The announcement was published Tuesday in the state-run Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper and other official media.

Allegations of widespread electoral fraud were the main reason cited by the military for its Feb. 1 seizure of power that toppled Suu Kyi's government. Her National League for Democracy party was about to begin a second five-year term in office after its landslide victory in the polls. The army-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party suffered unexpectedly heavy losses.

Independent observers, such as the Asian Network for Free Elections, found no evidence of substantive irregularities in the polls, though they criticized some aspects.

The action by the Union



Then Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi waits to address judges of the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands on Dec. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

Election Commission could potentially result in Suu Kyi's party being dissolved and unable to participate in a new election the military has promised will take place within two years of its takeover. However, the commission's notice, dated Monday, did not specify

which laws would be used to prosecute the accused. In May, the military-appointed new head of the election commission said his agency would consider dissolving Suu Kyi's former governing party for alleged involvement in electoral fraud and have its lead-

ers charged with treason. Commission Chairman Thein Soe said an investigation had determined that the party had worked illegally with the government to give itself an advantage at the polls.

After taking power, the military dismissed the mem-

bers of the election commission that had certified the results of last year's poll and appointed new ones. It also detained members of the old commission, and, according to reports in independent Myanmar media, pressured them to state there had been election fraud.

The new commission declared last year's election's results invalid.

The new notice from the commission said Suu Kyi, former President Win Myint, other leading figures in her party and the commission's former chairman were "involved in electoral processes, election fraud and lawless actions" related to the polls.

It accused 16 people of carrying out illegal actions, including compelling local election officials to obstruct military polling booths, threatening such officials in connection with advance voting for voters over 60 years old, forcing local officials to approve voting lists that included ineligible voters and interfering in campaigning to favor Suu Kyi's party. □

Netanyahu appears in court as ex-aide prepares to take stand



Former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, center, arrives for a court hearing on corruption charges Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021, in Jerusalem.

Associated Press

By ILAN BEN ZION

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeared in court for the first time in over half a year on Tuesday as a one-time confidant prepared to take the stand against him in a high-profile

corruption case.

But the long-awaited testimony was delayed until next week after a legal challenge from Netanyahu's lawyers.

Nir Hefetz, a former Netanyahu aide, is a star prosecution witness in the case against Netanyahu, with

his close proximity to the Netanyahu during several years in office a key part of the evidence. Hefetz left a long career in journalism in 2009 to work as a spokesman for Netanyahu's government, then in 2014 became the Netanyahu family's spokesman and adviser. Netanyahu entered the courtroom Tuesday accompanied by a lawyer, his younger son, Avner, and a pair of supporters from his Likud party. The security presence around the building was much smaller than past sessions, when Netanyahu was the prime minister.

His lawyers immediately asked that Tuesday's session be delayed following reports that another witness had come forward with new evidence alleging that Netanyahu's wife, Sara, had accepted an expensive bracelet as a gift

from two billionaire friends, Hollywood producer Arnon Milchan and Australian billionaire James Packer.

Netanyahu's lawyers argued that the former prime minister and his wife were caught off-guard by the allegations and had the right to study the evidence before Hefetz took the stand. After a short recess, the court accepted the request and postponed Hefetz's testimony until next Monday. Several dozen supporters waited for Netanyahu outside the building, with one man shouting at journalists "we'll throw you in the trash."

Netanyahu has been accused of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in three separate cases.

The first involves Netanyahu allegedly receiving gifts worth hundreds of thousands of dollars from wealthy friends, including

Milchan and Packer. In the second case, Netanyahu is accused of orchestrating positive coverage in a major Israeli paper in exchange for promoting legislation that would have harmed the paper's chief rival. The third one, nicknamed Case 4000, entails Netanyahu allegedly passing legislation worth hundreds of millions of dollars to the owner of Israeli telecom giant Bezeq in exchange for positive coverage on its Walla news site.

In 2018, after he was arrested by police in connection with Case 4000, Hefetz signed a state's witness deal and provided investigators with recordings of conversations with Netanyahu and his family. But because of his close connection with the former prime minister, Hefetz's testimony is likely to be relevant to all three cases. □

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2 explosions rock Uganda's capital, Kampala, killing 3

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkish authorities have issued a 40-day temporary custody order for a man considered a suspect in the July 7 assassination of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse and placed him in a prison in Istanbul, Turkey's state-run news agency reported.

The suspect, businessman Samir Handal, was detained at Istanbul Airport early on Monday while in transit from the United States to Jordan, Anadolu Agency reported. His arrest was announced by authorities in Haiti.

Haitian Foreign Minister Claude Joseph said on Twitter that he spoke with his Turkish counterpart about Handal's arrest. Joseph provided no more information, including whether Haiti would seek the man's extradition.

Anadolu Agency said Handal was wanted on an Interpol notice and detained by airport police on arrival in Istanbul. He was later questioned by court officials who issued the 40-day



In this handout photo taken from a video released by the Turkish police, businessman Samir Handal, center, being questioned at the international Istanbul airport, Istanbul, Monday, Nov. 15, 2021.

Associated Press

temporary custody order which was requested by Turkey's Justice Ministry, the report said.

He is currently in Istanbul's Maltepe prison, the agency reported.

Handal has been mentioned as a suspect in the

plot to kill the Haitian president, although the government has not given any specifics about his alleged involvement.

More than 40 suspects have been arrested so far in the presidential slaying, including 18 former Colom-

bian soldiers and several Haitian police officers. Colombian authorities have said the majority of its former soldiers did not know the true nature of the operation they were hired to participate in.

In October, another Colombian man was arrested in Jamaica.

Moïse was shot dead and his wife was wounded in a pre-dawn attack at his private home. The presidential killing deepened the political instability in the country, which also since then has been trying to recover from a magnitude 7.2 earthquake that killed more than 2,200 people in Haiti's southwestern region in mid-August, a spike in gang-related violence and a severe shortage of fuel. □

2 explosions rock Uganda's capital, Kampala, killing 3

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) — Two explosions rocked Uganda's capital, Kampala, early Tuesday, killing at least three civilians in what police described as a coordinated attack by extremists.

Three suicide bombers also died in the blasts, police said. The explosions caused chaos in Kampala as terrified residents fled the city's center.

"The bomb threats are still active, especially from suicide attackers," police spokesman Fred Enanga said, blaming the blasts on the Allied Democratic Forces, an Islamic extremist group.

The twin explosions occurred within three minutes of each other. Both were carried out by attackers carrying explosives. A possible attack on a third target was foiled

by police who pursued and disarmed a suspected suicide bomber, Enanga said. Police released security video footage of the precise moments the bombers detonated their devices in the streets, sending clouds of white smoke billowing in the air. "We give thanks to God. He has protected us," said eyewitness Jane Among near one of the blast scenes. "We first heard a blast, and then when we stayed a little we heard another blast and saw dust all over." One blast was near a police station and the other on a street near the parliamentary building, according to police and witnesses. The explosion near parliament appeared to hit closer to a building housing an insurance company and the subsequent fire engulfed cars parked outside. □



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A Change of Ownership at Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa



EAGLE BEACH — The Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa enjoyed a smooth transition today, Monday, November 15th, 2021, as its acquisition was formally concluded and signed, welcoming the Molo Hotel Group to Aruba.

Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa, one of Aruba's most iconic properties has been family-held since 1970, when legendary hotelier Ike Cohen bought the 72-room oceanfront hotel on famed Eagle Beach from its original developers, a pair of KLM pilots who opened the resort in 1966. Over the past five decades the resort evolved in Ike's vision, into a boutique retreat, an oasis of wellness and tranquility offering

luxurious accommodations, casual dining, personalized service, spa treatments, and yoga classes, becoming a Trip Advisor favorite and a Green Globe certified, sustainable resort. The Cohen family, and family representative Bill Crona, continued to cultivate and support the Manchebo vacation product, in the years after Ike's passing, contributing greatly to Aruba's prime tourist destination reputation.

In early 2020, just before the pandemic, the Slominski family vacationed in Aruba. Originally from Poland, the family formed a dynamic owner-operator hotel company in 2017. It was on the lookout for opportunities in Aruba, to help build its portfolio of

high-quality resorts in great locations, around the globe. According to son Lukasz Slominski, the Chairman of Molo Holding, he took a stroll down the beach with his parents, starting at the hotel where they were staying, and casually stopped at the Manchebo Beach Resort for a drink. The three Slominskis fell in love with the beach, and the location, shared their findings with other family members, and together decided to make an offer, adding Aruba to their list of Molo Hotels great locations. They contacted Bill Crona, and while the resort was not for immediate sale, in consultation with the Cohen siblings Tommy, Ree and Yvonne, who have been involved with the property from the start, for 50 years, the idea to place the Manchebo in the hands of a family-held company, became very attractive. The Slominski's expressed the desire to take the resort over, including all staffers and members of management, to continue doing what it does, maintaining the spirit of the original concept for the coming years, until an eventual expansion.

The Slominski's core business, was once furniture, as Eugeniusz Slominski, the patriarch, was a carpenter by profession, building furniture in his garage. The business developed into an environmentally friendly, modular, prefab construction operation, and from there being passionate about hotels and hotel development, the family gained experience in hotel design, construction, operations, and finance, becoming well placed to deliver growth, among other places in Aruba. The company is now located in the United Kingdom and headquartered in Switzerland. "Our multi-talented team," explains Slominski, "has the unique ability to assess and maximize development potential and improve operational efficiency. And, as we're privately owned with access to significant funds, we can make quick decisions allowing us to take advantage of the opportunities that come our way." While we are all emotional about the sale of the Manchebo," states Ree Case, "the Slominski family shares many of the Cohen family qualities. They have a vision for the future, and the resort will greatly benefit from new energy, while maintaining its warm, personal, and peaceful vibe." "There is never a right time to sell," adds Bill Crona, "especially when we talk about a property that has been a huge sentimental part of our lives, but we are confident that the Slominski family is a great steward to our people, our island, and our guests, couples, honeymooners, wellness-conscious travelers and beach lovers."

75,773 passengers departed in October

ORANJESTAD — Aruba Airport Authority N.V. (AAA) reports as follows on AUA Airport's performance for October 2021; another month with yet another satisfying recovery rate versus the same period in 2019.

In October 2021, AUA Airport handled 75,773 departing passengers. This was 13% more than the month before. During the past month AUA Airport recovered 84% of the amount of departing passenger that were handled

in 2019 during that same month. In October 2021 57,563 passengers (pax) travelled to the US, 1,039 pax to Canada, 6,807 pax to Europe, 3,212 pax to the Netherlands Antilles, and 7,152 pax to Latin America.

An average outbound passenger load factor (PLF) (number of seats of the total seats on board an aircraft that are occupied when departing from AUA Airport) for the US Market of 73% was reported during the month of October

2021, while the average PLF for all markets was at 75% during that same period (in comparison to 2019 where the PLF for all markets of 85% was reached).

During the past month, AUA Airport averaged 28 flights per day, down from 32 daily flights during the same period in 2019. In that same period in 2020 we only handled a total amount of 304 flights whilst our national border re-opened in July of 2020 for all commercial operations. □

Molo Hotels has fourteen hotels trading or under construction including a new upscale Marriott hotel in central Manchester; Courtyard by Marriott London Luton Airport; Hotel Indigo Liverpool Ropewalks; Holiday Inn Express Cambridge West; Courtyard by Marriott Edinburgh West; Holiday Inn Express Liverpool Ropewalk; Courtyard by Marriott Inverness Airport, Tapestry Collection by Hilton in Rome; and several hotels in Poland – Sopot and Warsaw. On hand for the signing: Grete 'Ree' Case, William 'Bill' Crona, Lukasz & Kate Slominski – he is Chairman of Molo Holding, brother Marcin & wife Justyna Slominski, Eugeniusz & Gabriela Slominski – parents of the four Slominski siblings, and Edgar Roelofs, resort general manager. □

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Rebecca y Christiaan Jansen

Don't limit your challenges. Challenge your limits.

Rebecca and Christiaan Jansen are siblings and are very active as triathletes. Their discipline and dedication can be seen at their continuous success in everything they set their mind to. From being extraordinary students to outstanding athletes, not only successful in Aruba but also internationally, Rebecca and Christiaan are true examples of extraordinary youngsters of Aruba.

Rebecca is 16 years old and goes to Colegio Arubano Highschool. Rebecca holds the title of Champion for the Caribbean region in Cycling. She is also National champion in Triathlon, Aquathon, Duathlon, 3km run and also Cycling circuit run 2021. Rebecca has been an athlete since 2016. Rebecca also won several Gold and Silver medals in the US and the Netherlands in Triathlon.

What do you want to be when you grow up?
I want to become a Marine Biologist.



What I like most about myself?

I love my athletic figure.

What I do when I feel sad?

I love to eat candy when I feel sad.

Who is your best friend and why?

I have many good friends, we go out together and have lots of fun.

What is your message to the children of Aruba?

My message for the children of Aruba is to always keep it up with school and practice a sport that you like.

Rebecca would like to motivate more girls to practice sports.

Christiaan is 14 years old and goes to Mon Plaisir College (HAVO). He is National Champion of Triathlon, Off-Road Triathlon, Duathlon, 1.5 km Run and also cycling circuit run 2021. Christiaan was also named Athlete of the year in 2017. He has

THE SHOPS AT ALHAMBRA CASINO

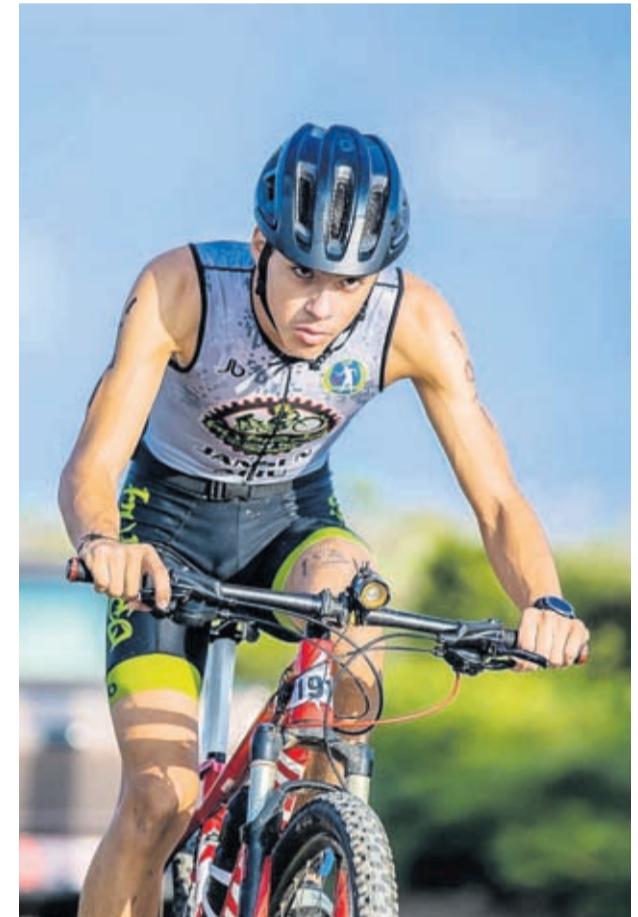
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won several gold and silver medals in The Netherlands and also a Bronze medal at CARIFTA doing Triathlon.

What do you want to be when you grow up?
I want to become a Boat Captain.

What I like most about myself?
I love the talent that I have for my sports.

What I do when I feel sad?
When I am sad I prefer to sleep.

Who is your best friend and why?
I have many good friends at school and in different sports. We go out together and have lots of fun.

What is your message to the children of Aruba?
My message to all the children of Aruba is to work hard towards your dreams to make them come through. □

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AHATA collaborated with CHTA Education Foundation to provide Service Refresher training

ORANJESTAD — In a continued effort to support members in achieving sustainable success, the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association has collaborated with the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) Education Foundation to offer training courses for management and staff in the Housekeeping Department and in the Food & Beverage Department. The courses were attended by over 90 participants from various hotels and restaurants.



The objective of the courses was to boost the morale of frontline hospitality personnel and motivate them to confidently deliver engaging and friendly guest interactions that increase customer satisfaction. Each participant was required to attend one full day of theoretical and practical learning. At the end of the day, each participant received a 'Caribbean Safe, Supercharged Service Refresher' Certificate from the CHTA Education Foundation.

The first course, Housekeeping Service Refresher Course, helped refresh participants on key areas such as:

- Proper housekeeping procedures
- Expanding the understanding of COVID-19 protocols
- Effective techniques for guest communications.

The second course, Food & Beverage Service Refresher Course, elaborated on the fundamentals such as:

- Food Knowledge & Preparation



- Beverage and Wine Basics
- Basics of upselling
- Communication for authentic guest engagement

The workshop covered verbal and nonverbal communication skills, COVID-19 safe service procedures, how to be more attentive, and other service aspects. Suzanne Shillingford-Brooks and Louise John from the CHTA Education Foundation served as facilitators, and both have extensive operational knowledge and experience.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, AHATA remains committed to providing members support and help them improve our tourism product.□

The Aruba Tourism Authority honor loyal visitors on the island

NOORD — Recently, Mr. Mario Arends OF THE Aruba tourism Authority, had the great pleasure to honor a Loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba as Goodwill Ambassadors at their home away from home. The symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba between 10-20-35 and more consecutive years.

The honorees were Rosemarie and Oscar Mauriello from Massachusetts

Arends thanked them for choosing Aruba as their vacation destination and as their home away from home for so many years together with the members of Marriott Surf Club

Top reason for returning provided by the honorees were:

Beautiful beaches, Friendly people of the Island and hospitality.□

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Charities see more crypto donations. Who is benefiting?

By HALELUYA HADERO

AP Business Writer

As the biggest cryptocurrencies flirt with record high values, they're increasingly becoming bigger sources of revenue for charities. However, the number of charities accepting the virtual currencies, known for their volatility, remains limited.

Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency, hit nearly \$69,000 for the first time in its history last week, roaring back after sinking below \$30,000 during the summer. The value of ethereum, the second biggest cryptocurrency, also hit a record high.

Both cryptocurrencies have dropped from their record levels after helping push the overall market cap of cryptocurrencies past \$3 trillion, according to CoinGecko pricing. As of Monday morning, CoinMarketCap, another popular measure, listed the market cap at \$2.8 trillion.

So far this year, Fidelity Charitable, the nation's largest grantmaker, has received more than \$274 million in cryptocurrency contributions—nearly quadruple its prior record of \$69 million in 2017, according to a company spokesperson. And the cryptocurrency donation platform Engiven said last month it accepted what it called the largest single Bitcoin donation known to date: a \$10 million Bitcoin gift to an undisclosed faith-based organization.

Many large charities and international aid agencies, like The American Red Cross and Save the Children, have set up mechanisms to accept cryptocurrencies or are using platforms that help them convert them into cash right away.

But smaller organizations—who make up the vast majority of registered nonprofits in the country—are attempting to figure out how to accept these currencies, or if it even makes sense for them to do so, said Rick Cohen, the chief communications and operating officer at the National Council on Nonprofits.



This May 12, 2021, file photo shows an advertisement for the cryptocurrency Bitcoin displayed on a tram in Hong Kong.

Associated Press

"For a lot of organizations, it feels a little bit scary because it's not the contribution of dollars that they're used to," Cohen said.

"It's not something that's free and easy" to set up, he said. "And they need to figure out if there's even demand from their current donors to be able to do it." The global humanitarian organization Action Against Hunger started accepting cryptocurrency donations last year after a group of donors approached them about taking the assets, said Aron Flasher, who manages corporate partnerships for the organization. Since then, he says they've raised more than \$1 million from virtual currencies.

"We feel like we've brought our issues to a very diverse cohort of supporters that we may not be reaching otherwise," Flasher said. "And so far, all of our projections show it's just going to increase."

A Pew Research Center survey released last week indicated 16% of Americans have invested, traded or otherwise used cryptocurrencies in some way. Driven by interest from millennials, the digital currencies have become more mainstream since Bitcoin's creation in 2009 but skeptics say their use is just a passing fad.

Gary Gensler, the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, said in September investors lacked enough protection in the cryptocurrency market, which he called "ripe with fraud, scams and abuse" and compared it to the "Wild West." Regulators have noted that the digital assets pose more risks for money laundering, terrorist financing and other crimes. And some countries have moved to outlaw the transactions.

Cryptocurrencies are an attractive asset to donate because they allow donors to bypass the capital gains tax. Donors would be subject to that tax if they convert the virtual currency into cash before giving it away, which means less money could go to their selected charity. Another bonus is an income tax deduction.

Tax savings, according to the small number of cryptocurrency owners who donated some of their holdings to charity, was a driving force behind their crypto gifts, Fidelity Charitable reported in October. Many of those investors also reported difficulty finding organizations that accepted the virtual currencies, which could be volatile for charities to hold.

When Ethereum co-founder Vitalik Buterin donated

\$1 billion worth of Shiba Inu coin—known as a "meme" or joke coin—to the India COVID-Relief Fund in May, the disclosure of the transfer drove down the token's price 50%. Two months later, Sandeep Nailwal, the aid group's founder, indicated only \$20 million had been used due to complexities with both converting the cryptocurrency and complying with government regulations in India regarding the assets. (The value of Shiba Inu has since surged in price).

The volatility in the crypto world is the reason why some giving platforms and donor-advised fund sponsors, like Fidelity Charitable, convert them into cash right away. Pat Duffy, the co-founder of the popular cryptocurrency donation platform The Giving Block, said though it's rare, some nonprofits who use the platform choose to hold the assets.

Fidelity places the cash from crypto in a donor-advised fund, which allows donors to get tax deductions upfront before distributing any of the money to a working charity.

"You can have a situation where somebody donates cryptocurrency, and if we don't sell it right away, it could lose 20% of its value in a day," said Tony Oomen,

men, a vice president and charity planning consultant at Fidelity Charitable.

"Or it could go the opposite direction," Oomen added. "But we don't try to speculate on that."

Fluctuating prices aren't the only concern. The environmental advocacy organization Greenpeace stopped taking Bitcoin earlier this year, citing environmental worries associated with mining the digital currency. Despite this pull-back, James Lawrence, the CEO of the donation platform Engiven, says he believes the majority of nonprofits will begin accepting crypto donations within the next five years.

"By most estimates, there's less than a few thousand that accept crypto," he said. "There's a lot of room for growth."

Pete Howson, a senior lecturer at England's University of Northumbria who researches cryptocurrencies, says the use of the virtual currencies could, in some cases, increase what he calls "surveillance philanthropy."

For example, GiveTrack, a cryptocurrency crowdfunding website, uses blockchain technology as well as material from charities to send donors reports on how their crypto contributions were spent.

Connie Gallippi, the founder and executive director of The BitGive Foundation, which runs GiveTrack, says the report simplifies transactions recorded on the blockchain and shows donors what their contributions bought. She said the report also shows donors how a charity spends funds it converts into a local currency.

Gallippi said the software's goal is to increase transparency in the nonprofit sector, adding any criticism of tracking is unwarranted because charities can decline to accept restricted donations.

"It's transparency at its best when you have no control over the data that's presented," she said. "Other than your actions that are behind that data." □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 38 Cavalry1 Boars' stations
mates 39 Soft drink5 Soccer buy
legend9 Partridge's quality
cousin

11 Dead 41 Egg holder

12 City
on the
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River13 Church
feature14 Maximum
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15 Cable ride

17 Straight
course19 Atlantic
fish

20 Essays

21 Finger
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22 Armistice

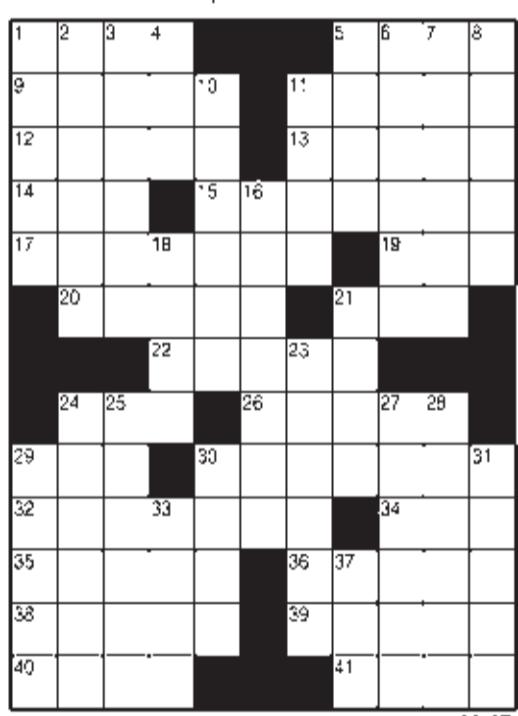
24 Compete

26 Main roles

29 Junior, to
senior30 Fleet
owner32 Special
phone
connection

34 Unmindful

35 Exemplary

36 Not
napping

11-17

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONG FELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

11-17

CRYPTOQUOTE

O W I I Q J X I Y N E C M Y L

E W O B C U C Z I Q E N J A L A J B D

C T F A E L Q J L O W L U E W U C Q B C F

Z Y A S O W Z C J N Z Z . — Y Q B Z L A J
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IF YOU JUST TRY
LONG ENOUGH AND HARD ENOUGH, YOU CAN
ALWAYS MANAGE TO BOOT YOURSELF IN THE
POSTERIOR. — A.J. LIEBLING

Ice on the edge of survival: Warming is changing the Arctic

In this July 19, 2011 file photo, a large melt pool forms in the Ilulissat ice fjord below the Jakobshavn Glacier, at the fringe of the vast Greenland ice sheet.

Associated Press

By SETH BORENSTEIN

AP Science Writer

While conducting research in Greenland, ice scientist Twila Moon was struck this summer by what climate change has doomed Earth to lose and what could still be saved.

The Arctic is warming three times faster than the rest of the planet and is on such a knife's edge of survival that the U.N. climate negotiations underway in Scotland this week could make the difference between ice and water at the top of the world in the same way that a couple of tenths of a degree matter around the freezing mark, scientists say.

Arctic ice sheets and glaciers are shrinking, with some glaciers already gone. Permafrost, the icy soil that traps the potent greenhouse gas methane, is thawing. Wildfires have broken out in the Arctic. Siberia even hit 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius). Even a region called the Last Ice Area showed unexpected melting this year.

In the next couple of decades, the Arctic is likely to see summers with no sea ice.

As she returns regularly to Greenland, Moon, a researcher with the U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center, said she finds herself "mourning and grieving for the things we have lost already" because of past carbon dioxide emissions that trap heat.

When covered with snow and ice, the Arctic reflects sunlight and heat. But that blanket is dwindling. And as more sea ice melts in the summer, "you're revealing really dark ocean surfaces, just like a black T-shirt," Moon said. Like dark clothing, the open patches of sea soak up heat from the sun more readily.

Between 1971 and 2019, the surface of the Arctic warmed three times faster than the rest of the world, according to the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program.

The result?

"The Arctic isn't just changing in temperature," Abdalati said. "It's changing in state. It's becoming a different place."

The 2015 Paris climate agreement set a goal of limiting the warming of the Earth to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial temperatures, or, failing that, keeping it under 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit). The world has already gotten 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer since the late 1800s.

The difference between what happens at 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees can hit the Arctic harder than the rest of the world, University of Alaska Fairbanks climate scientist John Walsh, a member of the Arctic monitoring team. "We can save the Arctic, or at least preserve it in many ways, but we're going to lose that if we go above 1.5."

The Arctic itself has blown past 2 degrees Celsius of warming, Stroeve said. It's approaching 9 degrees Celsius (16 degrees Fahrenheit) of warming in November, she said. □

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Times Square is back open on New Year's Eve — with vax proof

NEW YORK (AP) — Crowds will once again fill New York's Times Square this New Year's Eve, with proof of COVID-19 vaccination required for revelers who want to watch the ball drop in person, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced Tuesday.

"Yes, we are proud to announce that Times Square, wonderful celebration in Times Square, the ball drop, everything, coming back full strength the way we love it," de Blasio said at a virtual news briefing. "Hundreds of thousands of people there to celebrate. We can finally get back together again. It's going to be amazing."

Tom Harris, the president of the Times Square Alliance, said all spectators aged 5 and over will be asked to show proof of full vaccination. People who can't be vaccinated because of a



Confetti falls as people celebrate the new year in New York's Times Square, Jan. 1, 2017.
Associated Press

disability will have to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test, he said.

The New Year's Eve cele-

bration, perhaps the city's most iconic public gathering, was a socially distant affair during the height of

the pandemic last year. There were no packed crowds of giddy revelers, jammed together cheek-

by-jowl. Instead there were mostly empty streets as officials told people to stay home and watch the ball drop on television. Entertainers including Jennifer Lopez performed behind police barricades to small groups made up of essential workers.

With the advent of vaccines, the city's public celebrations have been on the upswing in 2021. The Macy's Fourth of July fireworks once again welcomed crowds to gather and watch as fireworks lit up the sky, and some parades have returned to city streets. The Macy's Thanksgiving Parade will also be returning to pre-COVID form, with giant balloons guided by volunteer handlers making their way through the event's Manhattan parade route, instead of the one-block stretch they were kept to last year. □

Robert Plant and Alison Krauss reunite to recapture magic



Confetti falls as people celebrate the new year in New York's Times Square, Jan. 1, 2017.
Associated Press

By MARK KENNEDY
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The first time they collaborated was such a surprise smash that the only question was when Robert Plant and Alison Krauss would sing together again. The answer is out this week.

Plant and Krauss — he jokingly calls them "Sonny and Cher" — are back with a new album of covers, 14 years after their surprise hit with critics and fans, "Rais-

ing Sand." "It's great to do this again and for it to have new life," says Krauss on the phone alongside Plant from Sound Emporium Studios in Nashville, Tennessee. The new album, "Raise the Roof," out Friday from Rounder Records, follows the blueprint of the first, including many of the same musicians and the producing smarts of T Bone Burnett. The recording was completed just weeks be-

fore the pandemic hit. So much time had past between recording sessions that Plant admits he was apprehensive that if the team didn't find the right material quickly, they wouldn't recapture their special alchemy.

The new album has Plant and Krauss singing deep cuts by Merle Haggard, Allen Toussaint, The Everly Brothers, Anne Briggs, Geeshie Wiley, Ola Belle Reed and Bert Jansch. There's also a Plant-Burnett original, "High and Lonesome."

"A great song has many lifetimes," says Plant and Krauss agrees. "You want them to have a life of their own and you have to have a very loose grip on those ideas so that they do become their own," she says. The pairing of former Led Zeppelin singer Plant with bluegrass violinist and singer Krauss turned out to be a surprise hit with critics and fans the first time around. "Raising Sand" debuted No. 2 on the Billboard 200, generated platinum sales and earned six Grammy Awards in 2009, upsetting

rapper Lil Wayne and British rock band Coldplay for top honors.

"The main surprise was, 'Wow, these guys actually can operate together?' It was against the odds," says Plant. "It's a sharing of something, a sharing of songs, that people didn't know anything about. It's one of my big trips in life." It was "Quattro (World Drifts In)," a song by the Americana band Calexico, that finally sparked the new recording sessions into life. That song "sort of drew us into another way of actually working, looking at voices together, a different kind of attitude to it," Plant says. "So long as we got the right key, we're doing great."

As they worked on the songs, Burnett — who Plant laughingly calls "the Archbishop of Cool" — insisted that they keep the sparks of the first takes and not go back to clean them up, which was especially hard for Krauss, a bit of a perfectionist. "The less precision is quite often the better, because it's soulful stuff," says Plant.

One highlight is a revisiting of Betty Harris' soulful, up-tempo "Trouble With My Lover" written by Tousaint. Plant urged Krauss to sing it and in her hands, it becomes moody, melancholy and sensual. But it took some convincing. "I was scared to death," she says. "I was scared to do that song, but I do think it now sounds fresh. I had to go hide under the chair for a while."

Other songs include Wiley's "Last Kind Words Blues" and "Can't Let Go," written by Randy Weeks and first recorded by Lucinda Williams. Williams herself sings backup on a cover of Brenda Burns' "Somebody Was Watching Over Me."

"There's nothing like sharing some musical thing you love and having someone get it," says Plant. "It's the stuff that happened in the song process last time and happened this time. It's one of the best parts of working with people that have a completely different background — you come across great music you never would have known otherwise." □

Thompson's year marked by no wins, painful losses

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

NAPLES, Fla. (AP) — The off-season can't get here soon enough for Lexi Thompson, except that she has two tournaments left, both at Tiburon Golf Club. Only one of them can salvage a lost year.

First up is the CME Group Tour Championship, the final event of the LPGA Tour season. And while the standings don't matter — whoever wins the tournament wins the Race to CME Globe and \$1.5 million — that Thompson is at No. 7 is only another reminder of a forgettable year.

She is the only player in the top 10 without a victory this season.

Unless she wins this week, it would be the second straight year without a title, which is hard to believe considering her immense talent, power and pedigree, not to mention the chances she had.

"What could have been" has become a year of "not again."

The most painful loss was in June at the U.S. Women's Open, where Thompson overpowered Olympic Club and the toughest test in the game. She built a five-shot lead with eight holes to play, only to throw it away with a 41 on the back nine by flubbing chips and jabbing at putts.

Instead of ending seven years without a major (also hard to believe), Thompson joined a roster of stars at the "graveyard of champions" — Ben Hogan, Arnold Palmer, Tom Watson, Payne Stewart. That's good company to keep unless it's a U.S. Open at Olympic Club.

The most recent loss was Sunday in the Pelican Women's Championship. This wasn't a major, but it felt bigger than a regular LPGA event because of the terrific duel between two American stars — Thompson and Nelly Korda, the No. 1 player in women's golf.

Korda effectively handed Thompson the tournament by making a mess on the 17th hole, capped off by



Lexi Thompson puts on the ninth green during the final round of the LPGA Pelican Women's Championship golf tournament at Pelican Golf Club, Sunday, Nov. 14, 2021, in Belleair, Fla.

Associated Press

missing a 2-foot putt and taking triple bogey.

Turns out Thompson was equally charitable. She three-putted from about 25 feet for bogey on the 17th. She still had a one-shot lead until taking three putts from off the 18th green for another bogey, missing a 4-foot par putt for the win. Korda made birdie to join a four-way playoff, and she ended it quickly with another birdie, because that's what the great ones do.

Thompson had a chance to extend the playoff with a birdie putt from 5 feet on the same line as the 4-foot par putt she missed in regulation. She missed again. That seems to happen more often than it should, and not just this year.

At the end of 2017, Thompson was on the verge of winning the CME Group Tour Championship when she steadied herself over a 2-foot par putt on the final

hole. A victory would make her the LPGA player of the year and send her to No. 1 in the world for the first time. She missed and was runner-up. Thompson still hasn't made it to No. 1 in the world (she is No. 12 now) and still hasn't won LPGA player of the year.

Thompson returned to Tiburon the following year and won the season finale by four shots over Korda. That might be the tonic she needs. For now, it's all she can do.

But how much more can she take?

Thompson spoke all week about staying committed

and being in the moment, all the right things golfers want to do until the moment gets the best of them. Judy Rankin, a Hall of Fame player and leading TV analyst in women's golf, is bullish on Thompson's outlook because of the progress she sees with the putter and the refinement in her swing. More than anything technical, Rankin sees effort and a willingness to put up with failure. That happens a lot in golf.

"I give her credit for the way she works and addresses her shortcomings and tries to whip it," Rankin said. "She has given every indication

that nothing is going to make her quit trying."

It's not too late for Thompson to change her legacy, which right now is more about what's gone wrong instead of the titles she has accumulated. Two years without winning shouldn't happen. One major in her 10 full years as an LPGA member is not enough.

Thompson is 26 and seems much older, perhaps because she has been through so much for so long. She qualified for her first U.S. Women's Open at age 12. She turned pro at 15 and won the first of her 11 LPGA Tour titles when she was 16.

She will be back at Tiburon in December for the QBE Shootout as the lone female player, her fifth appearance with PGA Tour players.

Two of those years — her best finishes — were with Tony Finau, who isn't playing this year. Finau could appreciate better than most what Thompson has endured, and he probably would have some words worth hearing.

Finau couldn't seem to close no matter how hard he tried. He had eight runner-up finishes and three playoff losses in the five years since his only PGA Tour win.

And then he broke through at Liberty National in August, a victory that effectively locked up a spot on the Ryder Cup team.

"It's hard losing, and it's hard losing in front of the world," Finau said. "That made me more hungry. If it doesn't discourage you, it makes you more hungry."

It would be easy for Thompson to get discouraged after a year like this, while going 40 starts on the LPGA Tour without a trophy. It's important not to lose her appetite. □



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Rays OF Arozarena, Reds 2B India earn Rookie of Year honors



Tampa Bay Rays' Randy Arozarena, left, watches his home run against the Houston Astros during the ninth inning of a baseball game Sept. 28, 2021, in Houston; and Cincinnati Reds' Jonathan India (6), right, throws to first base during the team's baseball game against the St. Louis Cardinals on Aug. 30, 2021, in Cincinnati.

By DAVID BRANDT
AP Sports Writer

It didn't feel like Randy Arozarena was a rookie this season. Tampa Bay's speedy and powerful outfielder certainly didn't play like one, either. Arozarena won AL Rookie of the Year honors with a superb follow-up to his 2020 postseason heroics while Cincinnati Reds second baseman Jonathan India earned NL Rookie of the Year on Monday night. The standout years for Arozarena and India highlight the changing profile of a

good MLB leadoff hitter. Both players have speed and a good eye, but also considerable power. It's the first time since 1953 that the rookie of the year winners were both primarily leadoff hitters. That season, Detroit's Harvey Kuenn and Brooklyn's Jim Gilliam won. If it didn't seem like this wasn't Arozarena's first year, there's a reason. The 26-year-old Cuban provided a stunning lift for the Rays during the 2020 postseason with 10 homers in 18 games during their run to the World Series. But Arozarena didn't play

enough during the 2020 regular season to lose his rookie status so he was eligible for the award this year. He followed up his postseason breakout with an excellent season in 2021, finishing with a .274 average, 32 doubles, 20 homers, 20 stolen bases and 69 RBIs while adding excellent defense, helping the Rays return to the postseason. "I know I was favored to be the rookie of the year," Arozarena said through a translator. "But for me, my mind wasn't set on the award or winning the award. My mind and my

goal was to have another good season and continue what I had done the year before."Arozarena earned 22 of 30 first-place votes in balloting by members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America, beating out Houston right-hander Luis Garcia and Tampa Bay infielder Wander Franco. Arozarena is Tampa Bay's first rookie of the year since outfielder Wil Myers in 2013. Five AL players received at least one first-place vote in this year's tally, including Garcia, Franco, Texas outfielder Adolis García and Cleveland pitcher

Emmanuel Clase. Garcia hit 31 homers this season while Clase had a 1.29 ERA in Cleveland's bullpen. The 20-year-old Franco has the label as one of MLB's future stars and his performance in 2021 did nothing to discourage that billing. The infielder hit .288 with seven homers and 39 homers while playing less than half the season.

The 24-year-old Garcia was instrumental in the Astros' run to the World Series this season. He had an 11-8 record with a 3.48 ERA and struck out 167 batters over 155 1/3 innings. India won the NL award eight months after earning the team's second base job during spring training and never letting it go during a stellar first season. The 24-year-old India received 29 of 30 first-place votes, beating out Miami left-handed pitcher Trevor Rogers and St. Louis outfielder Dylan Carlson. Rogers got one first-place vote. India said it's been an amazing journey from spring training, where he was a longshot to even make the regular-season roster. □

Medvedev beats Zverev and reaches ATP Finals semifinals



Russia's Daniil Medvedev celebrates after defeating Germany's Alexander Zverev during their ATP World Tour Finals singles tennis match, at the Pala Alpitour in Turin, Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

TURIN, Italy (AP)—Defending champion Daniil Medvedev clinched his place in the ATP Finals semifinals after beating 2018 champ Alexander Zverev on Tuesday to make it two wins out of two in Turin.

Medvedev, who won the U.S. Open in September for his first Grand Slam title, took just over 2 1/2 hours to beat Zverev 6-3, 6-7 (3), 7-6 (6) and move level with the German on a tour-leading 56 wins after a tense tie-breaker in the decisive set. "Definitely one of the

matches to remember," Medvedev said. "When you win 8-6 in the tie-break in the third, it was 4-2 for him so I was like OK, he serves a few aces it's done. I made it 6-4 and I was like OK, that's my moment now. It's back to 6-6 ... Just an amazing feeling. Not actually much to say about the match, just amazing."

Medvedev leads Red Group and was assured of his place in the final four after local favorite Matteo Berrettini pulled out of the

tournament. Berrettini retired against Zverev on Sunday with an abdominal injury and although he trained Tuesday he could not recover in time and was replaced by first alternate Jannik Sinner, another Italian. Sinner's first match will be against first-time qualifier Hubert Hurkacz later Tuesday.

Victory looked in good time in the second set as Medvedev dropped only two points in his first five service games. □